

# Challenging students

*Morrison hopes to build relationships with students*

**Nishant Mohan**

Argonaut

After being in higher education for 17 years, Hassel Morrison, new associate Dean of Students, said it's important to be comfortable with change.

"It's not weird to have a new department," Morrison said of the Dean of Students office, which has a number of new administrators.

Morrison said he is not concerned about joining a department with new leadership. He said organizational change is something he has both done research on and experienced himself during his time working in higher education.

The University of Idaho hired Morrison as the associate Dean of Students

after conducting a national search following Craig Chatriand's promotion to Dean of Students and then his subsequent resignation from the position.

Morrison said he wants to learn more about the culture on campus and in Moscow.

"There might be processes, there might be policies, there might be perspectives that we might not have touched on before, or might be lacking in," Morrison said. "My hope is that I can ask the questions or I can bring about the concern or I can bring a perspective that fills gaps."

Previously, Morrison served as associate and later interim director of Housing and Residence Life at North Carolina Central where he oversaw a \$11 million budget and was involved in listening to appeals in behavior issues.



**Morrison**

# CHALLENGING

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Morrison is a member of the fraternity Alpha Phi Alpha and said his membership in the organization allows him to relate to students in Greek life.

Morrison said he also served as a leader in the organization, advising the group and holding its members accountable.

“I had a wonderful experience,” he said.

Instead of making assumptions, Morrison said he wants to hear their feedback and start a conversation about their relationship with the university.

“Never underestimate the power of engaging with students,” Morrison said.

Morrison said that he hopes to challenge UI students the way faculty challenged him when he was a student.

“We were advocated for, we were helped, but we were appropriately challenged too,” he said. “It’s how we became leaders.”

While working at North Carolina Central, Morrison said he worked with a computer science student who had an opportunity to work a paid internship with a

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**Hassel Morrison**  
**associate Dean of Students**

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company in South Dakota.

The student had never lived outside of North Carolina and had not had an internship before.

“I asked him what he would be doing this summer and he said, ‘Well, I’ll probably just go home and work at Burger King,’” he said.

Morrison said he talked to the student about what was keeping him from taking the paid internship. The student took the offer and when he came back the next semester, he said it was the best experience he had ever had.

“That’s what I’m talking about challenging students,” Morrison said.

Morrison said he looks forward to his relationship with UI administration and faculty as well as students.

“Staben seems down-to-earth and more approachable than university presidents I’ve worked with in the past,” he said.

He also said that his interactions with new Dean of Students Blaine Eckles and Vice Provost for Student Affairs Jean Kim have been good.

“The faculty seem like they care and are supportive,” he said. “Students are at a good place here at the University of Idaho.”

Morrison received his undergraduate in media studies at Radford University and his master’s degree in education leadership from Virginia State University. He is currently working on his doctorate higher education through North Carolina State.

*Nishant Mohan  
can be contacted at  
arg-news@uidaho.edu  
or on Twitter @NishantRMohan*

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